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TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, EGEN, CG, LA, VM

SUBJECT:WEEKLY STATUS REPORT - VIETNAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA

1. REGIONAL

A. SENATE STAFF GROUP TO TRAVEL TO VIENTIANE AND HANOI (CONF)

AS PART OF A SOUTHEAST ASIA TRIP PRIMARILY CONCERNING
INDOCHINA REFUGEES, STAFF MEMBERS OF THE KENNEDY SENATE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION WILL VISIT VIENTIANE AND VIETNAM
AUGUST 19-28. STAFF MEMBERS DALE DEHAAN AND JERRY TINKER
SAW DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OAKLEY AUGUST 12 FOR A
BRIEFING ON THE POLITICAL/ECONOMIC SITUATION IN VIETNAM.
THE DELEGATION HAS MADE ITS OWN APPOINTMENT IN LAOS,WHERE
THEY HOPE TO MEET WITH THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
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HEALTH TO DISCUSS THE "HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OF THE LAO PEOPLE."
WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON THEIR VIETNAM PROGRAM,WHICH WILL
LAST APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK.

B. CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS (UNCL)

IN AN AUGUST 6 DOMESTIC BROADCAST CLEARLY ADDRESSED TO THE

SRV, CAMBODIAN RADIO PRAISED THE LIBERATION AND DEFENSE OF THE MONDOLKIRI SECTOR. THE BROADCAST NOTED "IN THE GREEN JUNGLE AND ON THE LONG RANGES OF MOUNTAINS WHICH STRETCH TOWARD THE BORDER OUR REVOLUTIONARY ARMY COMBATANTS ARE STATIONED EVERYWHERE WITH A FIRM DETERMINATION TO DEFEND THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BELOVED CAMBODIA...." MONDOLKIRI BORDERS ONLY VIETNAM, AT THE FORMER REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM HIGHLAND PROVINCES OF DARLAC AND QUANG DUC. IN AN AUGUST 8 DOMESTIC BROADCAST, CAMBODIAN RADIO NOTED THE GENERAL STAND OF THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE AND REVOLUTION-ARY ARMY AGAINST "ENEMIES OF ALL STRIPES, NEAR OR FAR, BIG OR SMALL...." ALTHOUGH NEITHER SIDE HAS REFERRED PUBLICLY TO THE FIGHTING ON THE CAMBODIA/VIETNAM BORDER, THE VIETNAMESE NEWS AGENCY CARRIED A STORY ABOUT THE VISIT OF GENERAL GIAP TO THE MEKONG DELTA. GIAP URGED VIGILANCE IN DEFENSE OF THE NATIONAL BORDER IN STANDARD LANGUAGE, BUT THE FACT THAT HE VISITED THIS MILITARY REGION IN THE SOUTH AT ALL IS SIGNIFICANT.

2. CAMBODIA

A. COMMENTS OF CAMBODIAN AMBASSADOR IN VIENTIANE (CONF)

IN A CONVERSATION WITH A NON-ALIGNED DIPLOMAT IN VIENTIANE, CAMBODIAN AMBASSADOR SAM SAN REPORTEDLY STATED THAT HIS COUNTRY WAS PREPARED TO DEFEND ITS BORDERS
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WITH ITS NEIGHBORS--A REFERENCE TO THE FIGHTING ON BOTH THE THAI AND VIETNAMESE BORDERS. SAM SAN SAID THAT KAMPUCHEA WAS NOT INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE MEKONG COMMITTEE AND ADDED THAT ORGANIZATION WOULD MAKE NO PROGRESS UNTIL RELATIONS AMONG ALL THE MEMBER COUNTRIES IMPROVED. SAM SAN ALSO STATED CAMBODIA IS NOT INTERESTED IN FOREIGN AID THOUGH AT SOME FUTURE POINT IT MIGHT CONSIDER UN ASSISTANCE. ACCORDING TO THE CAMBODIAN AMBASSADOR, HIS COUNTRY WILL HAVE A RICE SURPLUS FOR EXPORT IN 1977 "IF THE WEATHER HOLDS." CHINESE SOURCES HAVE BEEN PREDICTING CAMBODIA WOULD EXPORT 250,000 TONS OF RICE IN 1977. CAMBODIAN OFFICIAL RADIO, HOWEVER, HAS SAID THIS YEAR'S RAINFALL "IS LATE AND SPORADIC" AND HAS POINTED TO DIFFICULTIES "DUE TO THE UNFAVORABLE WEATHER." INFORMATION FROM OTHER SOURCES INDICATES WIDESPREAD FOOD SHORTAGES IN CAMBODIA.

3. LAOS

A. LAO PRESIDENT VISITING SOVIET UNION (CONF)

LAO PRESIDENT PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG AND GOVERNMENT ADVISOR

PRINCE SOUVANNA PHOUMA MADE AN UNPUBLICIZED DEPARTURE FROM VIENTIANE FOR MOSCOW ON THE REGULAR AEROFLOT FLIGHT AUGUST 10. THE PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT SAID THEY WERE TRAVELING "AT THE INVITATION OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE" AND THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT FOR A VISIT OF REST AND RECREATION. ACCORDING TO DIPLOMATIC SOURCES IN VIENTIANE, THE TWO HALF-BROTHERS AND MME. SOUPHANOUVONG ARE TAKING A 3-WEEK VACATION AT THE BLACK SEA RESORT OF SOCHI.

B. LAO AVIATION (UNCL)

LAOS AND THAILAND HAVE REINSTATED AIR SERVICE BETWEEN THEIR CAPITALS. AIR LAO RECOMMENCED FLIGHTS TO BANGKOK ON AUGUST 10, THE FIRST SUCH REGULARLY-SCHEDULED
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FLIGHTS SINCE 1976. AIR LAO IS NOW USING A SOVIET ANTONOV 24-D PLANE AND RUSSIAN PILOTS. ON APRIL 12 THAI AIRWAYS BEGAN FLYING TO VIENTIANE AGAIN, A ROUTE SUSPENDED LAST FEBRUARY. THERE ARE NOW FOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED FLIGHTS BETWEEN THE TWO CAPITALS EACH WEEK.

ON AUGUST 5 AIR LAO FORMALLY INAUGURATED A REGULAR MONTHLY FLIGHT TO PHNOM PENH. AIR LAO ALSO FLIES TO HANOI.

C. LAO STUDENTS ABROAD (CONF)

ACCORDING TO A LAO FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, THE USSR HAS GRANTED 600 NEW SCHOLARSHIPS TO BE USED BY LAO STUDENTS FOR STUDY IN THE SOVIET UNION. OTHER STUDENTS WILL LEAVE SOON TO BEGIN IN STUDIES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, EAST GERMANY AND CUBA. OUR EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE COMMENTS THAT THE LPDR MAY NOT BE ABLE TO FILL ALL THE NEW SOVIET SCHOLARSHIPS.

3. VIETNAM

A. AMCIT OF VIETNAMESE ORIGIN TO VISIT SRV (CONF)

IN WHAT WE BELIEVE IS THE FIRST CASE OF ITS SORT, AN AMERICAN CITIZEN OF VIETNAMESE ORIGIN HAS BEEN GIVEN A VISA TO VISIT VIETNAM. DR. JOHN H. LE-VAN, A RADIOLOGIST, WHO HAS LIVED IN THE U.S. FOR 20 YEARS, WILL TRAVEL WITH A FRENCH GROUP FROM PARIS TO HANOI LATER THIS MONTH, AND THEN VISIT HIS MOTHER IN HO CHI MINH CITY. DR. LE-VAN WAS GIVEN HIS VISA IN PARIS FOLLOWING WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS A CORDIAL TWO HOUR TALK WITH THE SRV AMBASSADOR.

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B. OIL FIND CLAIMED IN NORTHERN SRV (LOU)

THE LEADER OF AN SRV TRADE MISSION IS QUOTED BY REUTERS
IN SINGAPORE AS CLAIMING A NEW OIL STRIKE WITH SOVIET
ASSISTANCE IN THAI BINH PROVINCE, SOUTH OF HANOI. THE
OFFICIAL DID NOT INDICATE THE SIZE OF THE FIELD, SAYING
ONLY THAT IT WAS A GOOD COMMERCIAL PROSPECT. VANCE

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